What I claim is:

1. A genetically modified human microglia cell maintained as a stable cell line in-vitro comprising:

a modified microglia cell of human origin which

(i) has demonstrable phagocytic properties;

(ii) produces progeny continuously while maintained in culture;

(iii) presents at least CD11b and CD68 as surface antigens; and

(iv) contains human genomic DNA which has been genetically modified to include a viral vector carrying at least one DNA segment encoding an exogenous gene for intracellular expression.

2. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said viral vector is an amphotropic retroviral viral vector.

3. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said viral vector includes as exogenous DNA sequence encoding a v-myc gene.

4. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 further comprising the presence of the surface antigen RCA-lectin;

5. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 further comprising the presence of $P_{2Y1}$ receptors.

6. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 further comprising the presence of the surface antigens HLA-ABC (MHC class I); and HLA-DR (MHC class II).

7. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said cell expresses at least one active substance selected from the group consisting of cytokines and chemokines.

8. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 6 wherein said expressed active substance is selected from the group consisting of MIP-1β, MCP-1, IL-1β, IL-6, IL-8, IL-12, and IL-15.

9. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said cell is in a non-stimulated state.

10. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said cell is in a stimulated state.

11. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 10 wherein said stimulated cell overexpresses at least one pharmacologically active composition selected from the group consisting of cytokines and chemokines.

12. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said cell it utilized for screening of compounds for the treatment of autoimmune disease.

13. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said cell is utilized for the treatment of a neurodegenerative disorder.

14. The genetically modified human microglia cell as recited in claim 1 wherein said cell is utilized for the treatment of at least one pathology selected from the group consisting of Alzheimer disease, Parkinson disease, Huntington disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, stroke, spinal cord injuries, and ataxia.

15. A method for transforming human microglial cells into a genetically modified cell line, said method comprising

obtaining human microglial cells;

culturing said human microglial cells;

transfecting said cultured human microglial cells using a viral vector encoding at least an oncogene; and

expanding said transfectants in culture media as an immortalized cell line.

16. The method as recited in claim 15 wherein said oncogene is the v-myc oncogene.

17. The method as recited in claim 15 wherein said viral vector is an amphotrophic replication incompetent retroviral vector.